

Quarterly Meeting Summary

Attendance

Sean Graham , Senator Parlette's Office
Julia Kychun, Representative Warnick's Office
Commissioner Andrew Lampe, Okanogan County Commissioner
Lora Leschner, Pacific Coast Joint Venture
Pene Speaks, Washington Department of Natural Resources
Ken Risenhoover, Washington State Department of Transportation
Elizabeth Rodrick, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Steve Hahn, State Parks and Recreation Commission
Jeanne Koenings, Department of Ecology
Dominga Soliz, Recreation and Conservation Office
Josh Giuntoli, State Conservation Commission
Mike Deller, Trust for Public Land
Sarah Gage, Biodiversity Council

Welcome, Introductions, General Update

The group welcomed new member, Mike Deller, representing the Trust for Public Land. His alternate is Bill Clarke. He comes from the banking world, and has worked with the Port of Everett.

Dominga informed the group that she has received inquiries from the House of Representatives about including Representatives on the lands group. House members are welcome, and may contact Dominga to receive an invitation letter from the RCO director.

Dominga has been participating in the Chelan County Lands Dialogue in order to update that group on lands group issues. One of the primary objectives of the Lands Dialogue is to "achieve a net increase of land base in private ownership and development value in Chelan County."

The lands group's annual progress report was submitted to the Office of Financial Management in December 2010.

Draft Final Recommendations to the Legislature

The group reviewed the draft final recommendations report that is due to the Legislature by December 31, 2011. The draft is incomplete and the group reviewed for organization and strategy of the content.

At the last quarterly meeting, the group agreed that the final report should showcase the lands group's key deliverable: the state land acquisition transparency and coordination process. The group's statutory tasks are all related to the process, and more detail about the tasks can be included in the appendices.

The draft connects the transparency and coordination process with the original goals of the enabling legislation by tying the process to the recommendations that came out of the 2005 report, *Toward a Coordination Strategy for Habitat and Recreation Land Acquisitions in Washington State*.

Lands group members recommended the report make it clear up front that the lands group is not setting up something new - state land acquisitions are already happening and the lands group has no new authority. The report should show that there was already some coordination prior to the lands group, but that the group has improved the process somewhat. The Natural Heritage Advisory Council is an example of coordination at work. DNR's Trust Land Transfer Program and Washington State Department of Transportation's Wetland Mitigation Program will be included in the report.

One of the primary drivers for the lands group's legislation was to make state land acquisitions more transparent to local government officials, citizens, and others who are concerned about the effect of public ownership of land on local tax bases. The report should address this concern by describing what has changed and what is being done to compensate local governments for public land purchases, and, possibly, how public ownership can increase local revenue and value.

The general public perception of uncoordinated state land acquisitions should be addressed. Examples of the benefits of regular coordination should be used to illustrate successes. What happens at the forums and through the reports and maps that makes them so important? Commissioner Lampe noted that simply bringing people with sometimes diametrically opposed views together to have a conversation is important. The report should focus on information delivery, including maps, as the key outcome from the group.

The group considered the funding strategy to propose in the report. The report lays out 3 options: 1) the lands group continues with no dedicated funding source 2) the lands group continues with dedicated funding and 3) the lands group is eliminated. Members agreed that the transparency and coordination process should continue whether or not dedicated funding is available. State agencies agreed to determine what their level of participation could be if there is no dedicated funding in the future. Can they continue to attend quarterly meeting and provide staff to help develop maps, presentations for the coordinating forums, etc.? The funding section of the report can explain that there is an added financial benefit to agencies to continue coordinating.

Biennial State Land Acquisition Monitoring Report

The group reviewed a proposal to publish the first Biennial State Land Acquisition Monitoring Report on the lands group website in September 2011. The report is intended to meet the group's statutory task of "monitoring the success" of state land acquisitions. It essentially asks, "Did you do what you said you were going to do?"

The members approved the proposal to provide a before-and-after look at state agency habitat and recreation acquisition projects from the previous biennium. It will compare project proposals with completed projects by using maps and comparing data that includes cost, number of acres, and project descriptions.

A draft outline will be presented to the lands group at its next quarterly meeting.

CLEER Exchange

Lands group member Eric Beach provided the group with agendas for the upcoming Conservation Lands and Exceptional Environmental Resources meeting in Portland on March 16, 2011. The meeting is described as "A Marketplace and Symposium for Buyers and Sellers of Conservation Lands and Exceptional Environmental Resources. It is being organized by private timber companies and Eric described it as an opportunity for state agencies, land trusts, and other potential buyers to learn about conservation opportunities. Lands group member and RCO director Kaleen Cottingham will give a presentation on conservation resources.

The meeting is by invitation only. Anyone who would like an invitation should contact:
Galen Schuler

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Potential Legislative Action

The group briefly discussed issues under consideration by the Legislature that could affect the lands group: 1) what would happen to the lands group if there was a moratorium on state agency land acquisitions and 2) what would happen to the lands group if natural resource agencies are consolidated.

The group agreed that it is too early to speculate on effects on the lands group by consolidation because we don't know how agency functions would be consolidated. The moratorium would affect projects proposed for funding in the 2011-13 biennium, but there would still be a need to coordinate on longer term plans and disposals, and to improve transparency.